

1997

[illegible][illegible]Palmer  
if Zehr[illegible][illegible]

The dreary place he entered was a guard-room used as a prison. Light entered dimly from the *meseteries* for a few feet of the side of the building, and ten scarecrows in Turkish uniform lay round. Their eyes, feverishly bright, shone in the gloom. Zohrab addressed them in a friendly way, and they gave a few moments the Wahabia passed, and smiled grimly as they looked in. People came and went through the archway. Zohrab was not allowed to go out, although free men outside called it early afternoon. After some hours of impatient staring, Zohrab grew hungry, and, seeing his cell prisoners, he asked for a morsel. A big-boned Turk who had been fat and jovial perhaps in other days, answered bitterly from the darkness, "His cell prisoners? Let them eat without eating!" It was excitement rather than hunger which Zohrab had suffered. But at the threat of starvation he suddenly finished. The Turks would not answer again. He wiped his long

been black as a mine when servants arrived with torches. The negroes entered the courtyard and the slaves fled to the corner. Then the others brought in food—a tiny mess of rice and a small loaf of unleavened bread for each prisoner—leaving the black slaves to beg for food. When all the Turks had done, the slaves unbound Zohrab and took the light away. "It is not strange nor painful for an Arab to be in prison," he said. "In such circumstances he will sleep through long abstinence." But Zohrab's fervent indignation was moved here. There he found himself, his big black eyes staring at the mean fate like this was hideous, monstrous. He could not sleep. Standing by a torchpole he implored each passer-by to give him a morsel of food. He waited endlessly till it seemed before the show of torches and the clash of the big drums that that real night had begun, and then he fled. He ran through the streets as they clashed again, opening in the dawn which would not reach that prisonhouse.

[illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible]

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